



Est. 1949

# American Legion Post 1758 Newsletter

August 2018

American Legion Post 1758,  
alpost1758-ny.org

PO Box 92,

Hopewell Junction, NY 12533  
email:Commander@alpost1758-ny.org

## HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2. WWI Femail Phone Operators
4. Post Picnic
5. Land Sale/Community Day
6. Free Picnic, shooting & fishing
7. Dutchess County 100 year Veteran Parade
6. Free Hudson Valley Renegade game

Our next meeting will be **Wednesday, September 12, 2018** at 7:00 PM at the **Old East Fishkill Town Hall**, Rte. 52, next to the Police Station. Please try to attend.

Please note that September's meeting will be held Wednesday, not Tuesday. The change is to avoid conflict with 9-11 ceremonies.

The most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched, they must be felt with the heart.

Helen Keller

**Special Notice:** If you are a veteran in emotional crisis and need help RIGHT NOW, call this toll-free number

**1-800-273-8255**

available 24/7, and tell them you are a veteran. All calls are confidential.

**Membership:** Our Post has about 54% of the membership renewed for 2019. Remember you have an option of renewing your membership online. You can do so by clicking here: [Online Renewal](#)

Congratulations to **Caroline Pogge and John Call** for becoming our latest PUFL members. You can also become a PUFL by clicking on this link: [PUFL application](#)  
Rates are based on your age and they are currently running a \$100 Off promotion. Payment may be spread over 12 months if you wish.

## Wisconsin documentarian sparks effort to honor World War I female phone operators with Congressional Gold Medal

Meg Jones, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Published

*(Photo: National Archives)*

A group of female phone operators who served in France in the U.S. Signal Corps and were denied veterans benefits for six decades may be posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal.

The ranking member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee last week introduced a bill to honor the phone operators with one of America's highest civilian awards.

The move to honor 223 American women who volunteered for the Army Signal Corps in France was spurred by a documentary released earlier this year by Wisconsin native Jim Theres.



Theres recently screened the hourlong film at the Billings, Montana, public library and among the crowd was a staff member of Sen. Jon Tester (D-Montana). Soon after, Theres got an email from Tester's office asking for more information about the women.

"After 100 years, it's all going to finally come out right. They'll be officially recognized by the U.S. Congress," Theres said in a phone interview.

Nicknamed the "Hello Girls," they took oaths to join the U.S. Army Signal Corps, underwent training by AT&T before boarding ships to Europe and headed to war before most of the American doughboys arrived. The women connected 26 million calls and ultimately proved to be a significant factor in winning the war. Among the phone operators chosen from more than 7,000 volunteers were two women from Wisconsin — Martina Heynen from Green Bay and Hildegard Van Brunt from Milwaukee.

Gen. John Pershing, the commander of the American Expeditionary Forces, requested the Army send female phone operators because they could connect calls much quicker than men. The women had to be bilingual because they frequently had to translate conversations between American and French commanders.

Just as radios were the main form of communication during the World War II, troops used telephones during World War I. Every command to advance or retreat or commence firing came through a phone line and it took an operator to connect those calls.

When the war ended in November 1918, they remained in Europe while most of the American troops returned home, staying through the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 to handle calls. Two of the Hello Girls died in France from the Spanish flu epidemic.

When the women returned home and tried to join veterans organizations, they were told by the Army that they had not been soldiers, but civilians. That shocked the Hello Girls, who wore Army Signal Corps uniforms, saluted officers, lived in barracks and were not free to leave whenever they wished. The women were denied veterans benefits, medals and the right to march in Memorial Day parades.

For decades, they fought to be called veterans but numerous attempts to get legislation through Congress failed until finally they were given veteran status in 1978. By then, though, only a handful of Hello Girls were alive.

“When you look at what they did, they were serving in dangerous places. They went over in U-boat-infested waters. They even stayed on after the war was over for a year working the communications for the Versailles Peace Treaty,” said Chris Isleib, director of public relations for the World War I Centennial Commission.

Gold Medals are awarded by Congress to individuals and groups for major achievements in history or culture. Recent recipients include Women Airforce Service Pilots, Native American World War II code talkers and the 442nd Infantry Regiment of Japanese Americans who fought in Europe during World War II.

A spokesman for Tester said the Montana senator partnered with Sen. Dean Heller (R-Nevada), another senior member of the Veterans Affairs Committee, to introduce the legislation, which will next go to the Senate Banking Committee. That committee has oversight of the U.S. Mint, which creates the medals.

Just how long it will take is unknown though previous legislation for Congressional Gold Medals has taken more than one session of Congress to pass.

Theres was looking to create a documentary about World War I and found a 2017 book written by Elizabeth Cobbs about the Hello Girls. Stunned by the heroism of the forgotten women, Theres sought out relatives of the Hello Girls and completed his film earlier this year, showing it in Milwaukee in May and on Wisconsin Public TV last month.

Now he’s ecstatic to hear that the American phone operators who made such a difference in the outcome of World War I may finally be awarded the Congressional Gold Medal.

“They’re superheroes to me,” said Theres, a Racine native and University of Wisconsin-Whitewater graduate. “All these women were just so humble. How they performed (during World War I) was how women were going to be judged going forward. Now 100 years later, here’s one of the highest civilian honors for them.”



### **Good of the Legion:**

Sal D'Angelo's name was pulled for the Pot Of Gold Drawing. Unfortunately Sal was not in attendance so the money is added to the Pot. The "Pot" is closing in on \$600.00. When we finally have a winner in attendance he/she gets half of the pot. It's been a while, I'm guessing about 2 years since we've had a payout.

# Picnic

28 members and family gathered on July 22nd for our post picnic. All seemed to enjoy themselves.



# Land Sale

Bill Kriebel and Don Burns have spent a considerable amount of time working with our realtor to determine our options for selling the 3 lots we own on Prout Lane. At our August 14th meeting the Post voted to offer all three lots together for \$75,000. We also gave the Building Committee permission to approach the Town Of East Fishkill next May to grieve the assessed values for the three parcels. The assessments seem very high to us and may be a deterrent to a buyer.

## East Fishkill Community Day

Community Day will be held this year on September 15th.

The parade steps off at 2:00PM, our marchers will line up on Trinka Lane at 1:30. Tom Masch and Norm Dauerer will line up their jeeps with other vehicles on Palen Road.

We will have a table in the Veteran's Tent along with other Veteran Organizations. Currently our plans call for handing out small American Flags and selling Memorial Blocks for \$10.00. The blocks will be labeled with the person's name and branch of service logo and an American Flag will be inserted through the block.

We will need marchers, at least a color guard, for the parade. In addition we need help at our table to disseminate legion information, hand out the small flags and sell the memorial blocks.



Veterans can enjoy a free day of shooting, fishing and a picnic at Northern Dutchess Rod & Gun Club on September 23rd. The Club is located at 140 Enterprise Road, Rhinebeck, NY

**NORTHERN DUTCHESS ROD & GUN CLUB**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL VETERANS SPORTSMAN'S DAY**  
**SUPPORT OUR LOCAL VETERANS**  
**GUN RAFFLE**

**F  
E  
A  
T  
U  
R  
I  
N  
G**

**DARK STORM INDUSTRIES**  
DS-9 NY COMPLIANT



**SAVAGE AXIS II 6.5 CREEDMOOR**  
W/ 3X9 WEAVER SCOPE



**HENRY BIG BOY GOLDEN**  
-45 LONG COLT LEVER ACTION



**WINCHESTER SXP DUCKS**  
UNLIMITED .12 GAUGE



\*\*\* IMAGES NOT OF ACTUAL PRIZES \*\*\*\*\*

**DRAWING TO BE HELD**  
**SEPTEMBER 23, 2018** *8:00AM*

**\$10.00 PER CHANCE**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT OUR EVENT  
BUT ARE NOT INTERESTED IN A FIREARM, BUY A  
TICKET AND WRITE "DONATE"; IF THAT TICKET  
IS DRAWN, ONE OF THE VETERANS AT THE  
EVENT WILL WIN!**



**ALL PROCEEDS GO TO SUPPORTING THE VETERANS DAY EVENT AT  
NORTHERN DUTCHESS ROD & GUN CLUB  
\*WINNER NEED NOT BE PRESENT/ INCLUDES ALL TRANSFER FEES\***

*CALL DAN LOVELAND. 1845 332.0788*

Dutchess County Division of Veterans Services, Director, Marc Coviello has invited all of the American Legion and VFW posts of Dutchess County to be part of a parade in honor of the **Year of the Veteran, 100 years since WWI.**

The parade will be **Sunday, September 30<sup>th</sup> stepping off at 1pm.** It will begin at the corner of Cannon and Market street in Poughkeepsie, marching down Main Street to Waryas park at the Hudson River. This march is half a mile. If some participant veterans are unable to walk, we will have military jeeps as well as the National Guard driving an LMTV, (Light Medium Tactical Vehicle) they are welcome to ride along. Mike Athanas, Dutchess County Area "A" Vice Commander and Commander Hyde Park Post 1303, will also provide a float that can accommodate approximately 20+ Legionnaires. Upon completion of the march, we will have a BBQ/gathering at Waryas park honoring Gold Star Family members.

Legionnaires this is an opportunity to be recognized for your service. It is a parade to honor veterans for the past 100 years. There are plenty of seats available for those who can't march. Even if you don't want the recognition come out for the camaraderie and BBQ. This is the perfect opportunity to have the American Legion logo front and center in the public eye- free publicity may equal new members. And it should be a good time.



Tom Masch had a plaque made for our Boffers Cannon when it is displayed. Great job Tom!



Here are September's upcoming birthdays. May this be one of the best birthday's ever:

Donald Kellam - September 1  
 Robert Licurse - September 3  
 Norm Dauerer - September 10

Stephen Donahue - September 2  
 Evert Munning - September 9  
 Charles Hertel - September 27

The National database does not have birthday's listed for the following members.

<i>Nicholas Russo</i>	<i>Daniel Oberhauser</i>	
<i>David Dimilia</i>	<i>Joseph Varacek</i>	<i>Ralph Schwartz</i>
<i>Francis Connolly</i>	<i>Daniel Lalor</i>	<i>John Polasko</i>
<i>Robert Logan</i>	<i>Bruce Coneeny</i>	

Please contact Jim Reynolds with your birthdate so our records can be updated.



At our July meeting we drew a name for \$50.00 in Texas Road House gift cards. **Caroline Pogge** was the winner.....Congratulations Caroline.

We will attempt to give away some more gift cards at the Dutchess County Fair while visiting the Warrior Wagon.



## THE OIL PATCH WARRIORS OF WORLD WAR II

Seventy-five years ago this month, a Band of Roughnecks went abroad on a top secret mission into Robin Hood's stomping grounds to punch oil wells to help fuel England's war machines.

It's a story that should make any oilman or woman proud.

The year was 1943 and England was mired in World War II. U-boats attacked supply vessels, choking off badly needed supplies to the island nation. But oil was the commodity they needed the most as they warred with Germany.

A book "The Secret of Sherwood Forest: Oil Production in England During World War II" written by Guy Woodward and Grace Steele Woodward was published in 1973, and tells the obscure story of the American oil men who went to England to bore wells in a top secret mission in March 1943.

England had but one oil field, in Sherwood Forest of all places. Its meager output of 300 barrels a day was literally a drop in the bucket of their requirement of 150,000 barrels a day to fuel their war machines.

Then a top secret plan was devised: to send some Americans and their expertise to assist in developing the field. Oklahoma based Noble Drilling Company, along with Fain-Porter signed a one year contract to drill 100 wells for England, merely for costs and expenses.

42 drillers and roughnecks from Texas and Oklahoma, most in their teens and early twenties volunteered for the mission to go abroad. The hands embarked for England in March 1943 aboard the HMS Queen Elizabeth. Four National 50 drilling rigs were loaded onto ships but only three of them made landfall; the Nazi U-boats sank one of the rigs en route to the UK.

The Brits' jaws dropped as the Yanks began punching the wells in a week, compared to five to eight weeks for their British counterparts. They worked 12 hour tours, 7 days a week and within a year, the Americans had drilled 106 wells and England oil production shot up from 300 barrels a day to over 300,000

The contract fulfilled, the American oil men departed England in late March 1944. But only 41 hands were on board the return voyage. Herman Douthit, a Texan derrick-hand was killed during the operation. He was laid to rest with full military honors, and remains the only civilian to be buried at The American Military Cemetery in Cambridge.

"The Oil Patch Warrior," a seven foot bronze statue of a roughneck holding a four foot pipe wrench stands near Nottingham England to honor the American oil men's assistance and sacrifice in the war. A replica was placed in Ardmore Oklahoma in 2001

It is by no means a stretch to state that without the American mission, we might all be speaking German today.

Special thanks to the American Oil and Gas Historical Society.



**Veteran Resources Located Inside The Stadium.**  
**Call Your County VSO For Information & Tickets.**

Orange County: 845-291-2470  
Putnam County: 845-808-1620

Dutchess County: 845-486-2060  
Rockland County: 845-638-5244

